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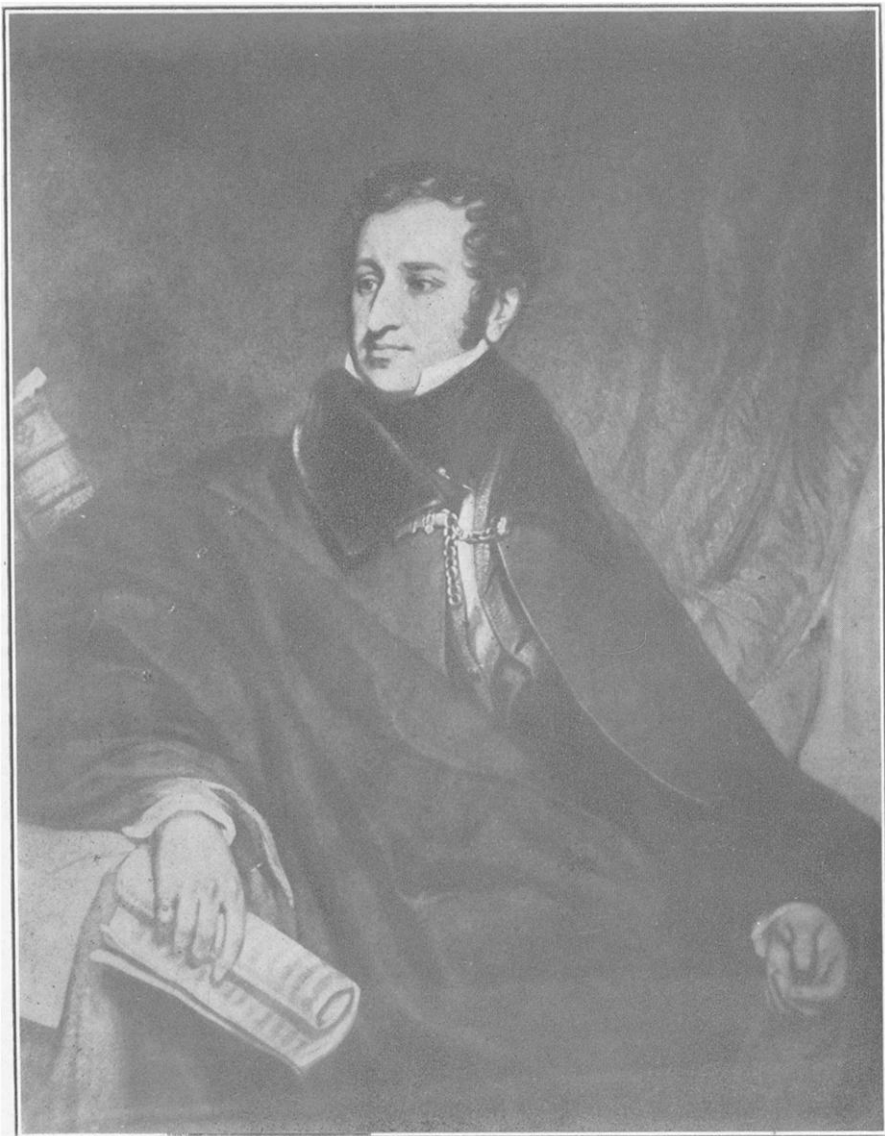
# THE WORKS OF SIR HENRY BISHOP

By F. CORDER

**H**ENRY Rowley Bishop occupies a curious position in the gallery of distinguished musicians. During his life-time his music was much over-rated, even by his fellow composers; but after his death nothing at first survived save his brilliant "Glees" (so called) and some half a dozen popular but trivial songs. Now, sixty years later, the "Glees" are forgotten, but the songs have put on immortality. Let us look into this.

There is no definitive or trustworthy account of Bishop's life and works, even that in the *Dictionary of National Biography* being incomplete, as I shall show. The life of a theatrical conductor, who spends all his time in scoring and arranging his own and other people's works, can hardly be expected to teem with incident, and I know of nothing which could be profitably added to the existing scanty account of Bishop's doings. So we will dispose of this unimportant part of our subject in the fewest words.

Born in London on November 18, 1786, his talent for music was of that spontaneous kind which often shows itself at an early age. He says in his diary (extracts from which appeared in *The Musical Times* of October, 1895), "The first song I remember to have had printed was entitled "He winna tak' the hint" which was published in 1800, or 1801." This would make him less than fifteen at the time, but he must have been precocious in other ways as well, for he goes on: "I was then in partnership with my cousin, William Wigley, a music-seller in Spring Gardens, at the corner of the passage leading into St. James's Park, during which time we bought of Dr. Arnold, for £50, a *Ballet d'occasion* called "The Corsair" performed at the Haymarket Theatre, and which we published." After bringing out several other early compositions of Bishop's this partnership came to a termination and the youth went to Panton's at Newmarket, whilst there becoming a pupil of Francesco Bianchi who was an operatic composer and conductor of repute and whose style he imitated thenceforward.



**Sir Henry Rowley Bishop, 1786-1855.**

**Reproduced from the rare engraving of the Foster portrait, a copy of which is in the  
Royal Academy of Music, London.**

Bishop's first composition for the stage was a kind of Vaudeville, or musical comedietta, entitled "Angelina", produced for the benefit of an actress. Next he assisted in some ballets and before long got a commission for an opera at Drury Lane. (Those were wondrous days!) The accident of the theatre being burnt down the day after this production brought the composer into notice and he was offered an engagement by the manager of Covent Garden as musical director and composer to that theatre. What his qualifications were we are not informed, but this is just the kind of thing that managers do, and Bishop, who must have had Jewish blood in him, kept this post for fourteen years, only quitting it to step into a similar engagement at Drury Lane. He returned to Covent Garden again fourteen years later. Though he rose high in his profession, teaching for some years at the then recently established Royal Academy of Music, taking a musical degree at Oxford in 1839 and receiving the honour of knighthood in 1842, he was never a rich man, but after a life of incessant and badly rewarded labour, died almost in indigence on April 20, 1855. He was twice married, both his wives being singers. By the first—a Miss Lyons, he had two daughters; the second, Anne Rivière, eloped with the old harpist Bochsa—"a man," as Mr. Lillyvick in *Nicholas Nickleby* says "that any man might have considered himself safe from." And when one thinks of the many brilliant songs Bishop wrote for his wife, while Bochsa's attempts at composition were—but there! There is never any sense or reason in these things.

Original engraved portraits of Bishop are scarce. The portrait in the National Gallery has been photographed but not engraved. Another fine portrait by T. Foster was engraved, but copies are remarkably rare, only two being known. A poor lithographic portrait by Vigneron is commoner. An excellent steel engraved head by Wageman was issued in a musical paper (the *Harmonicon*, I believe) and there is a lithograph by the same artist after that by Vigneron. A very poor woodcut (but good likeness) appeared in the *Illustrated London News* with a notice of his works shortly before his death.

Bishop's dramatic compositions, with which we are chiefly concerned, amount to the formidable total of one hundred and forty-four; but this is including all those to which he merely contributed a song or two, though even in these cases he probably had to score the entire works for small band. We shall best make our way through this list by arranging the pieces first in alphabetical and then in chronological order.

COMPLETE LIST OF THOSE STAGE WORKS IN THE MUSIC OF WHICH HENRY  
BISHOP WAS IN ANY WAY CONCERNED.

Name	Description	Bishop's connection with it
15 Æthiop	Romantic Drama	Overture and some ballads.
94 Aladdin	Opera. Also called Har- oun al Raschid	Wrote all of it
111 Alchemist, The	Opera by Spohr	Adapted it
1 Angelina	Musical trifle	Unknown
69 Antiquary, The	Drama	12 numbers
27 Anthony and Cleopatra	Tragedy	One musical number
55 Apostate, The	Tragedy	2 numbers
3 Armide et Renaud	Romantic drama	Overture
26 Artaxerxes	Opera by Arne	In 1813 he added a Finale, in 1814 arranged the reci- tatives and in 1839 sup- plied additional accompani- ments.
35 “		
125 “		
68 Arthur and Emmeline	Opera by Purcell	Unknown
89 As you like it	“Opera” ( <i>sic</i> )	All the music; 15 numbers
130 Aurora	Ballet	Unknown
60 Barber of Seville	Opera by Rossini	Rewrote it
72 Battle of Bothwell brigg	Melodrama	Mostly arranged Scotch airs
83 Beacon of Liberty	“Historical Romance”	8 numbers
126 Beggar's Opera	By Pepusch	Probably improved the ac- companiments.
116 Bottle of Champagne	Comedietta	A few songs
20 Brazen bust	Romantic melodrama	An Overture and 20 melo- dramas
37 Brother and Sister	Operatic play	6 numbers with other com- posers
58 Burgomaster of Saardam	Melodrama	Incidental music; quantity unknown
123 Captain or the Colonel	Operetta	A few songs
7 Caractacus	Ballet d'action	The whole
88 Charles II	Comedietta	A few songs
9 Circassian Bride	Grand opera	Nearly the whole; 11 numbers
83 Clari	Domestic drama	22 numbers
70 Comedy of Errors	Comedy	15 numbers; partly arrange- ments
18 Comus	Masque by Arne	Two songs
92 Coronation of Charles X	Spectacle	Unknown
85 Cortez	Historical play	21 numbers
42 Cymon	Dramatic Romance	11 numbers out of 14
59 December and May	Musical Farce	Unknown: one number pub- lished
135 Devil's Bridge	Melodrama	Additions, of unknown extent
112 Demon	Meyerbeer's <i>Robert</i>	Arranged
90 Der Freischütz	Opera by Weber	Arranged
32 Dr. Sangrado	Spanish ballet	25 short dances
49 Don Juan	Opera by Mozart	Rewrote it
75 Don John	Musical play	10 out of 13 numbers
102 Don Pedro	Drama	Unknown
117 Doom-ship	Melodrama	Unknown
51 Duke of Savoy	Musical play	Unknown: 5 numbers pub- lished
191 Edward, Black prince	Historical play	One song known
98 Englishmen in India	Comic opera	16 numbers
132 Exit by mistake	Comedy-ballet	Unknown
91 Fall of Algiers	Opera	9 numbers
134 Fazio	Tragedy	Unknown
28 Farmer's Wife	Opera	9 numbers with Reeve
52 Father and his children	Romantic drama	Unknown
73 Faustus	Romantic drama	All the music; 19 numbers
100 Fidelio	Opera by Beethoven	Arranged

Name	Description	Bishop's connection with it
23 For England ho!	Melodramatic opera	13 out of 15 numbers
33 Forest of Bondy	Melodrama	A quantity of action music
127 Fortunate Isles	Spectacle	Unknown
62 Fortunatus and his sons	A musical drama	21 numbers
53 Gentle Shepherd, The	?	Unknown
66 Gnome king	Opera	13 numbers and much action music
31 Grand Alliance	Spectacle	National anthems arranged
44 Guy Mannering	Opera	10 numbers, (1 by Attwood)
133 Hamlet	Tragedy	Incidental music, quantity unknown
21 Harry le Roy	Pastoral Burletta	14 numbers, some being arrangements
63 Heart of Midlothian	Musical Drama	12 numbers
50 Heir of Vironi	Operatic piece	7 numbers
71 Henri Quatre	Opera	14 numbers, some arrangements
77 Henry IV, Part 2	Historical play	Coronation music
107 Hofer	Opera by Rossini	Adapted
104 Home, sweet home!	Drama	13 numbers
48 Humorous Lieutenant	Old play altered	9 numbers
56 Illustrious Traveller	Melodrama	Unknown
41 Jean du Bart	Historic melodrama	Overture and dances
34 John of Paris	Light opera by Boieldieu	13 numbers substituted by Bishop
140 Kenilworth	Drama	Unknown
13 Knight of Snowdon	"Grand opera"	18 numbers
97 Knights of the Cross	Drama	Unknown
11 La Sonnambula	Opera by Bellini	Adapted
79 Law of Java	Musical drama	14 numbers
49 Libertine	Opera by Mozart	Cruelly adapted
129 Lionel and Clarissa	Old opera	Additional numbers
131 Lodoiska	Opera by Cherubini	Adapted
142 Lord of the Manor	Opera by Jackson	Additional numbers
113 Love Charm	Opera by Auber	Adapted
5 Love in a Tub	Ballet	Wrote all the music
124 Love's Labour Lost	Comedy	Incidental music
67 Macbeth	Tragedy	Additional accompaniments to Lock
114 Magic Fan	Vaudeville	A few songs
40 Magpie or the Maid	Melodrama	Incidental music
89 Maid Marian	Opera	18 numbers
120 Maid of Cashmere	Opera by Auber	Adapted
36 Maid of the Mill	Old opera	6 additional numbers
122 Manfred	Poetic drama	Unknown
12 Maniac	Grand opera	14 numbers
61 Marriage of Figaro	Opera by Mozart	Cruelly adapted
95 Masaniello	Opera by Auber	Adapted
18 Midas	Old opera	Additions
43 Midsummer Night's Dream	Shakespeare	19 numbers
22 Miller and his Men	Melodrama	13 numbers
142 Mirandola	Tragedy	Unknown
74 Montoni	Tragedy	Unknown
78 Montrose	Drama	11 numbers
10 Mora's Love	Ballet	17 short numbers
8 Mysterious Bride	Romantic drama	Unknown
4 Narcisse et les Graces	Ballet	Unknown
87 Native Land	Opera by Rossini	Arranged (vamped)
81 Nigel	Drama	Unknown
105 Night before Wedding	Opera by Boieldieu	Adapted
106 Ninetta	Opera by Rossini	Adapted
38 Noble Outlaw	Comic opera	16 numbers
25 Poor Vulcan	Musical burletta	2 numbers

Name	Description	Bishop's connection with it
98 Rencontre	Operatic Comedy	10 numbers
15 Renegade	Drama	9 numbers
54 Retribution	Drama	Unknown
64 Roland for an Oliver	A Farce	Adapted (?)
110 Romance of a Day	Opera	16 numbers
17 Romeo and Juliet	Tragedy	Unknown
47 Royal Nuptials	Pageant	Unknown
121 Rural Felicity	Comedietta	1 song
30 Sadak & Kalasrade	Spectacle	Music to Act I only
115 Sedan Chair	Vaudeville	Unknown
24 Selim and Azor	Drama	Additions
6 Siege of St. Quentin	Melodrama	Dramatic music
46 Slave	Opera	All the music, some 21 numbers
139 Stanford's Diorama		Unknown
65 Swedish Patriotism	Melodrama	Unknown
2 Tamerlane and Bajazet	Ballet	Additions
133 Teazing made easy	Comedietta	Unknown
39 Telemachus	Old opera	6 additional numbers
82 Tempest	Shakespeare	Unknown
73 Twelfth Night	"	12 numbers
76 Two Gentlemen of Verona	"	12 numbers
112 Tyrolean Peasant	Melodrama	Unknown
108 Under the Oak	Vaudeville opera	Unknown
86 Vespers of Palermo	Tragedy	"
11 Vintagers	Musical Romance	"
14 Virgin of the Sun	Opera	16 numbers
137 Vision of the Sun	Spectacle	Unknown
29 Wandering Boys	Romantic drama	All the music
141 Waverley	Drama	Unknown
45 Who Wants a Wife?	Burletta	5 numbers
128 Wife of Two Husbands	Drama	Unknown
109 William and Adelaide	Vaudeville	"
94 William Tell	Opera by Rossini	Thrice adapted
136 X. Y. Z. by advertisement	Farce	Unknown
103 Yelva	Melodrama	19 numbers
57 Zuma	Opera	About 15 numbers

Of these 144 works 50 can be summarily disposed of; 15 rest only on the authority of Bishop's own diary, which is curiously incorrect, both as to dates and details. These doubtful works are:

The Vintagers, prod.	Aug. 1, 1809 (a)	Montoni	May 3, 1821
Romeo and Juliet	1811	Nigel	Jan. 28, 1823
Midas	1812	The Tempest	1823
The Royal Nuptials	1816 (a)	Vespers of Palermo	Dec. 12, 1823
The Gentle Shepherd	1818 (a)	Coronation of Charles X	May 15—1825
Retribution	Jan. 1, 1818		really July 5—1825
Macbeth	1819	Don Pedro	Feb. 10—
Arthur and Emmeline	1819		really March—1823

Those marked (a) do not appear in contemporary advertisements; the rest were produced, but without advertising any music by Bishop. Thirteen other works are not mentioned by Bishop, but appear in the list given only in the generally accurate *Dictionary of National Biography*.

The Wife of two husbands	May 9, 1808	X. Y. Z.	June 13, 1818
Aurora	Sept. 1814	Vision of the Sun	March 23, 1830
Lodoiska	Oct. 15, 1815	Hamlet	1830
Exit by mistake	July 27, 1816	Stanford's Diorama	1830
Teasing made easy	July 30, 1817	Kenilworth	1832
Fazio	Feb. 5, 1818	Waverley	1832
The Devil's Bridge	Apr. 11, 1818		

Neither *Hamlet*, *Kenilworth* nor *Waverley* appear to have been played at Covent Garden in the years here given and I find no trace of the others. Twenty-four other works were at least nominally Bishop's, but were never published; some were first-night failures, others adaptations, the extent of his connection with which cannot now be known. They are

	Produced		Produced
Illustrious Traveller	3, 2 '18	Magic Fan	June 1832
Burgomaster of Zaardam	23, 9 '18	Sedan Chair	June 1832
Swedish Patriotism	19, 5 '19	Bottle of Champagne	" "
William Tell (twice)	11, 5 '25	Doom-ship	Oct. "
	'35	Love-charm	Nov. "
Masaniello	17, 2 '25	Sonnambula	1833
Knights of the Cross	29, 5 '28	Maid of Cashmere	"
Fidelio	1827	Manfred	1834
Ninetta	4, 2 '30	Captain or Colonel?	1834
(revised as <i>The Maid of Paliseau</i> in 1837)		Love's Labour's lost	"
Alchymist	March 1839	Beggar's opera	"
Demon (Roberto)	March 1832	Fortunate Isles	12, 2 '40
Tyrolean Peasant	May 1832		

Of the ninety-four works with which Bishop is known to have been connected some are adaptations, of very various degrees of freedom, about twenty are pieces to which he contributed only a song or two, and sixty are wholly or in great part actually his composition. Let us now give a word or two to each of these.

1. *ANGELINA*; a Musical Farce, produced at the Margate theatre in 1804 for the benefit of Mrs. Henry. Bishop revived it in 1825, but it was never published.

2. *TAMERLANE ET BAJAZET*. A grand Heroic Ballet, produced at the King's theatre in 1806 (date uncertain). Bishop says, "The chief part of the music I selected from a Ballet by Martini, by desire of the ballet-master, Ropi . . . the pieces I composed for it . . . were published by Pearce and Co. in the Haymarket. This Ballet had a very great success." The published Pfte score contains, however, no music by Bishop.

3. *ARMIDE ET RENAUD*, May 15, 1806. Bishop supplied an Overture, of little merit, which he arranged as a Pfte duet and published.

4. *NARCISSE ET LES GRACES*. Ballet, June 1806 at the King's theatre. There are seventeen short numbers; apparently the scoring only is Bishop's.



5. LOVE IN A TUB. "Pastoral Ballet" produced in Nov. 1806. It ran for three hundred nights—an extraordinary success for those days. It afterwards became a regular stock piece for circuses and survives, I believe, to the present day. There are sixteen short, lively numbers.

6. THE SIEGE OF ST. QUENTIN. Produced at Drury Lane in 1807 and revived in 1808. Bishop only wrote some pieces of incidental action music for it.

7. CARACTACUS. Ballet, produced at Drury Lane, April 1808. The Pfte score was published; it contains an Overture, a pretty Quartet, "Breathe, my harp" and numerous marches and dances of scant merit.

8. THE MYSTERIOUS BRIDE. Drury Lane, June 1, 1806, with music "composed and arranged" by H. B. Other details lacking.

9. THE CIRCASSIAN BRIDE. Bishop's first "Grand opera." Drury Lane Feb. 23, 1809. The theatre was burnt down the next day and the music lost. Bishop rewrote all he could remember of it and published it. The vocal score is extant, with a curious frontispiece representing flames and a phoenix amid them. If there were any ensemble pieces they have been omitted, as is frequently the case. There are some average songs and the usual pot-pourri Overture, described more fully later.

10. MORA'S LOVE, or THE ENCHANTED HARP. A Ballet of some seventeen nos. all quite short and trivial. Produced at King's theatre on June 15, 1809 and afterwards transferred to the Lyceum under the title of "The Caledonian Minstrel." Revived at Covent Garden Dec. 4, 1817.

12. THE MANIAC; OR THE SWISS BANDITTI. Lyceum, March 13, 1810. This was one of Bishop's most typical works. It contains the fine chorus "The tiger couches" and several other picturesque numbers.

13. THE KNIGHT OF SNOWDON. Covent Garden, Feb. 5, 1811. An operatic version of Scott's *Lady of the Lake* by Thomas Morton. Here we have the excellent choruses "Now tramp!", "What ho, clansmen!" and "Gallant liegemen," besides a good Quartet and a drinking song which seems almost too good to be genuine.

14. THE VIRGIN OF THE SUN. Jan. 27, 1812. An opera on Kotzebue's old play of *Pizarro*. Contains a couple of effective choruses and several bright, but terribly conventional songs.

15. THE ÆTHIOP. Produced, like all the others till further notice, at Covent Garden. It was damned the first night (Oct. 6, 1812) and revived with additional music on Jan. 11, 1813 under the title of "Haroun Al Raschid." Inferior work.

16. THE RENEGADE. An adaptation of Dryden's play "Don Sebastian." The music is about on a par with the preceding item.

18. COMUS. A couple of songs were added to Arne's music in 1813.

20. THE BRAZEN BUST. May 29, 1813. A Melodrama, to which Bishop supplied an Overture of the usual kind and some twenty short pieces of action-music.

21. HARRY LE ROY. A "Heroic Pastoral Burletta" founded upon Dodsley's "King and the Miller of Mansfield." Bishop describes his music with great incorrectness as "Written entirely in recitatives and Airs, partly original and partly selected from French and other sources." But the only borrowed numbers are "Ye banks and braes" and "Savour-



38. **THE NOBLE OUTLAW**, comic opera in three acts, April 7, 1815. Overture and fifteen vocal numbers, all uninteresting except one, which is the famous song 'The Pilgrim of Love.'

39. **TELEMACHUS**. June 7, 1815. An old ballad opera, for this revival of which Bishop contributed five songs and what he calls 'The celebrated glee of the Winds.'

40. **THE MAGPIE OR THE MAID**. Sept. 15, 1815. A well-known drama, with numerous scraps of melodrama and an Overture, which is a pot-pourri of French airs.

41. **JOHN DU BART, OR THE VOYAGE TO POLAND**. Oct. 25, 1815. Described as a 'Grand Historical Melodrama.' In the Overture Bishop has given almost his only attempt at Programme Music, labelling the items, for fear of mistake. There is a frigate setting sail, wind rising, storm, shipwreck and so forth, the whole ending with the usual inane dance movement which goes on till the curtain is ready to rise. There are two songs and some common marches and dances.

42. **CYMON**, a Dramatic Romance. Nov. 20, 1815. Contains a weak Overture and ten songs by Bishop, two by Michael Arne and a pretty one by Braham.

43. **A MIDSUMMER NIGHT'S DREAM**, Jan. 17, 1816. Here we have nineteen numbers, none of much merit except the five which are 'adapted'. These include Handel's 'Hush, ye pretty warbling choir!' Bishop *prend son bien où il le trouve*.

44. **GUY MANNERING**. March 12, 1816. This so-called 'Opera,' a melodrama founded on Scott's novel, with quite superfluous music, is the only work by which Bishop's name is now remembered. If it contains four of his weakest ballads (for which others are usually substituted) and two still weaker ones by Attwood, it also contains three of his very best 'Glees,' as they are called—"The winds whistle cold," "The fox jumped over," and "The chough and crow" besides an Overture which is a mere string of Scotch tunes, but having got printed, survives to this day.

45. **WHO WANTS A WIFE? OR THE LAW OF THE LAND**. April 16, 1816. A rather successful burletta with an Overture, song, melodramas and one glee 'Goodnight!' which contains a curious anticipation both of Bishop's "Home, sweet home!" and Sullivan's "*H. M. S. Pinafore*."



46. **THE SLAVE**, an opera in three Acts. Nov. 12, 1816. There are eighteen numbers, of unequal merit. The opening sextet "Blow, gentle gales" is one of Bishop's best efforts and the Finale to Act II is quite powerful, but most of the songs are exasperatingly futile, save a dramatic scene "Pity the slave!" The whole ends with the gay dance from "John of Paris."

48. **THE HUMOROUS LIEUTENANT.** Jan. 18, 1817. A modernised version of Beaumont and Fletcher's play with nine musical numbers. There are two rather pretty songs, but the rest is feeble.

49. **DON JUAN, OR THE LIBERTINE.** May 20, 1817. This is a terrible example (or so it seems to us now) of the unprincipled adaptor's misdeeds. Mozart's opera being produced at one operatic establishment with success, the rival house must evade the laws of copyright by putting on a piracy of the work with fresh music. It is needless to catalogue Bishop's alterations. Scarcely a number but is mutilated; most of the concerted pieces are omitted altogether, while a duet from "The Magic Flute" and several dances by Mozart, Bishop and Martini are interpolated.

50. **THE HEIR OF VIRONI.** Feb. 27, 1817. A trifling after-piece with seven numbers of agreeable and unpretentious music. The opening chorus "Look out, the time is near" is very nice.

51. **THE DUKE OF SAVOY.** An adaptation from Dalayrac's *Deux petits Savoyards*. It was a failure, but five numbers were published.

52. **THE FATHER AND HIS CHILDREN,** Oct. 25, 1817. There is a notice of its failure in Kenrick's *British Stage*, but no music is mentioned.

55. **THE APOSTATE,** May 13, 1817. A tragedy by Richard Shiel. Two poor numbers were published, but the play, which was a failure, does not appear in even the D. N. B. list.

56. **THE ILLUSTRIOUS TRAVELLER.** Feb. 3, 1818. Another failure. No music is mentioned in the advertisements or notices.

57. **ZUMA, OR THE TREE OF HEALTH.** Feb. 21, 1818. Opera by C. Dibdin, the libretto based on a moral tale by the Comtesse de Ségur. The published libretto has an amusing preface, the vocal score does not contain any of the choruses, which are the only good things in the work. "Daughter of error" is an excellent piece and there are three others, all published as "Glees." Fifteen numbers in all, besides two songs by Braham (also omitted).

59. **DECEMBER AND MAY,** a musical Farce; May 16, 1818. A failure, one song being published. Of this Bishop says " 'Rude was the gale and unkind was the billow' was not altogether an inappropriate song to print after the storm which the piece encountered the first night of its performance."

60. **THE BARBER OF SEVILLE.** Oct. 13, 1818. Another terrible adaptation. Rossini's Overture was not good enough, so Bishop wrote another. He omitted seven numbers and all the recitatives, abbreviating all the other numbers and interpolating six songs of his own.

61. **THE MARRIAGE OF FIGARO,** March 6, 1819. This work was treated even worse. The Overture and eight of Mozart's best numbers are omitted and ten vile songs and six dances by Bishop substituted. There is a dreadful song for *Susanna* with a Cadenza for voice and Clarinet, a Scotch song transcribed, besides pointless alterations in the original numbers retained. A really shocking affair. There is a scathing notice in Kenrick, but the piece had a good success.

62. **FORTUNATUS AND HIS SONS.** April 12, 1819. The vocal score was published, but the music is deadly conventional, some of it a curious imitation of Haydn. Twelve numbers and numerous short melodramas.

63. **THE HEART OF MIDLOTHIAN.** April 17, 1819. This is nearly all vamped up from Scotch airs, but there is a very good chorus of rioters.

64. A ROLAND FOR AN OLIVER. April 29, 1819. Bishop says that the music was adapted and arranged from French airs. They do not sound like it, but I suppose we must take his word for it.

66. THE GNOME KING. Oct. 6, 1819. The music here is abundant in quantity but deficient in interest. Even the choruses are not of his best. "The Gaber's (*sic*) Glee" is fairly good, on the lines of "The Chough and Crow." There are thirteen numbers and numerous melodramas.

69. THE ANTIQUARY. January, 1820. The music (twelve numbers) is almost entirely a dish-up of Scotch tunes. The exception is one really delightful song "Adored and beauteous Isabel," which is one of Bishop's rare gems in this line.

70. COMEDY OF ERRORS. Dec. 11, 1819. Here we have all the Shakespearean lyrics out of all the plays, set by Arne, Stevens and Bishop. Not a dish to be proud of, but it includes the well-known "Lo, here the gentle lark!" and a very pretty ballad "Sweet rose, fair flower!"

71. HENRI QUATRE. April 22, 1820. The music here again is a curious medley, being largely French airs transcribed but including also the well-known "Tell me, my heart" the duet "My pretty page" and the really fine chorus "Allegiance we swear."

72. THE BATTLE OF BOTHWELL BRIGG. May 22, 1820. Simply Scotch tunes transcribed.

73. TWELFTH NIGHT. Nov. 8, 1820. There are twelve numbers, six being adapted and six original. The latter include "Bid me discourse."

75. DON JOHN, OR THE TWO VIOLETTAS. Feb. 20, 1821. A very inferior work. Thirteen numbers, of which three are by Ware.

76. TWO GENTLEMEN OF VERONA. Nov. 29, 1821. Here all the music is new. There is a nice Quartet "Good night, good rest!", a clever duet "On a day" and the popular song "Should he upbraid." The title-page of the vocal score says "The music composed—with the exception of the melodies—by Henry Bishop." This is certainly not correct and it would be a large exception if it were true.

78. MONTROSE, OR THE CHILDREN OF THE MIST. Feb. 14, 1822. This contains a good Trio, "How deep the sighs." The rest is Scotch broth.

79. THE LAW OF JAVA. May 11, 1822. An average specimen, with conventional songs, a nice duet "Away when we flee, love" and the famous chorus "Mynherr van Dunk."

80. MAID MARIAN. Dec. 3, 1822. After so many weak attempts, Bishop seems to have pulled himself together and produced in this his best work. It is a truly English ballad opera on a truly English subject. Out of the eighteen numbers four are somewhat cheap, but there is a superior Overture, half a dozen excellent choral numbers, including "Though he be now a grey, grey, friar," "Hart and Hind" and "O, bold Robin Hood," a florid song "Let us seek the yellow shore" and a beautiful ballad "O, well do I remember", closely akin to "Home, sweet home!". Even the Finale is better than usual.

83. CLARI, OR THE MAID OF MILAN. May 8, 1823. This domestic drama had a long lease of popularity, but only on account of the attractiveness of the world-famous ballad "Home, sweet home!" round which the whole thing is written. About this I shall speak later, but there is

also the pretty serenade "Sleep, gentle lady!" and a very strong chorus "Pursue, pursue!" Concerning the rest of the music the less said the better.

84. *THE BEACON OF LIBERTY*. Oct. 8, 1823. Another of the inferior works. Contains nothing worthy of mention save a vigorous patriotic song, "Away, in glory's trumpet sound!"

85. *CORTEZ, OR THE CONQUEST OF MEXICO*. Nov. 5, 1823. A better example, showing Bishop both at his best and worst. As usual, the choral pieces are best, "Hark, 'tis the Indian drum!" being a brilliant specimen—one of five. The songs are rather better than usual.

87. *NATIVE LAND, OR THE RETURN FROM SLAVERY*. Feb. 10, 1824. This seems vamped up from a Rossini opera, fourteen numbers out of twenty-one being Bishop's and the others adapted. There is one dance with a very good tune and one excellent ballad; the rest is poor.

88. *CHARLES II*. May 27, 1824. A Comedietta. Only one song was published.

89. *AS YOU LIKE IT*. December 1824. The music (fifteen numbers) is mostly old Shakespearean stuff by Arne, etc. One Glee "Lo, in the orient!" is excellent.

90. *DER FREISCHÜTZ*. Jan. 1825. An adaption of Weber's opera which owes nothing to Bishop but some deplorable cuts. But according to the Life of Weber there were some scandalous interpolations. These do not appear in the published vocal score.

91. *THE FALL OF ALGIERS*. Jan. 19, 1825. A wretched work, showing Bishop at his worst. Nine numbers.

93. *FAUSTUS*. A Romantic drama by G. Soane. One wonders what it can have been about, so strangely incongruous are the thirteen pieces in it. The Overture is that to Weber's *Euryanthe*. The opening Glee of Fishermen has a curious melody of only three notes, which must be a record. And the last number, a scena "O Saul, O king!" can only be called a piece of astounding balderdash. It begins in F. sharp minor and suddenly goes on in F. minor, finally relapsing into the tune of the Fishermen's Glee.

94. *WILLIAM TELL*. Bishop mentions in his list having adapted this opera thrice, in 1825, in 1830 (when it was called *Hofier*) and 1835 (Guillaume Tell). The first version has only an interpolated ballad for tenor called "The Savoyard's Air." Produced May 21, 1825.

96. *ALADDIN*. This is Bishop's solitary specimen of a real opera without spoken dialogue. It was produced on April 29, 1825 at Drury Lane in rivalry with Weber's *Oberon* at the other house. Of this work Bishop says; "Chiefly owing to the imperfect state in which it was brought out it was not successful" but my own father and two other persons (George and Walter Macfarren) who witnessed the production contradicted this emphatically. They described the staging as magnificent, but the music as insipid, a study of the vocal score confirming this. Indeed it is so phenomenally dull as to be quite unlike Bishop and to engender a suspicion that he never wrote it at all. His subsequent work, though not his best, is quite different from this.

98. *ENGLISHMEN IN INDIA*. Jan. 27, 1827. Described as a Comic Opera. It contains a spirited opening chorus, two pretty ballads, a good sailor song and an elaborate "Echo Quartet," the rest being poor.

99. *THE RENCONTRE*. July 12, 1828. A work similar to the last, but with no striking numbers.

100. *FIDELIO*. Adapted from Bethoven, but without alteration, so far as is known.

103. *YELVA, OR THE ORPHAN OF RUSSIA*. Feb. 5, 1829. Bishop says that he translated this himself from the French "except the poetry." There are nineteen musical pieces, all very trivial and uninteresting.

104. "*HOME, SWEET HOME!*" March 19, 1829. An examination of the score of this work makes it apparent, that "*Clari*" having outlived its popularity a fresh medium for the exploitation of Bishop's immortal ballad was demanded. The "*Ranz des vaches*" is thrown in as an additional attraction, but all the music is sorry stuff.

107. *HOFER, OR THE TELL OF THE TYROL*. May 1, 1830. This is the second adaptation of Rossini's opera to a new libretto, in order to evade the performing rights. This version had a fair success, though many numbers of the original are omitted and some very shoddy ones by Bishop inserted. There is a Soprano solo cleverly made on the time of the march in the Overture and the *Tyrolienne* is arranged for Soprano with choral accompaniment, but the rest is poor.

110. *THE ROMANCE OF A DAY*. Feb. 3, 1831. Contains one charming ballad "*The Marriage of the Rose,*" but the rest is only average.

This was the last of Bishop's operas which got into print, so that the remainder will never be more than mere names. It is as well to state that my authority for the above particulars is that of the works themselves, all those published having been in my possession and the majority being now in the library of the Royal Academy of Music, London.

For the sake of completeness I may as well give here a list of Bishop's other works, for the correctness of which I cannot vouch, as the composer's diary is the chief authority, and I have found this to be rather unreliable. No less than fifteen dates of production which he gives are quite wrong.

- 1805 *Grand Sinfonia in C*
- 1807 *The Travellers at Spa*. Entertainment for Mrs. Mountain
  - Twelve Glees
  - Concertante for Violin, Flute, Oboe, Bassoon and Bass
  - Trio for three Flutes
  - Sonata for Violin and Piano
  - Part of an Oratorio, *The Deluge*
- 1814 *Hanover Cantata* written for Braham (omitted by H. B.)
- 1816 Selection of Scottish melodies
- 1817 *Funeral Cantata*, "*Mourn, Israel!*"
- 1818 *Funeral Anthem* for Queen Charlotte
- 1819 Several separate songs
- 1820 *An Irish Overture*
  - A collection of Irish melodies
- 1821 *A Triumphal Ode* for George IV

1. *Overtures.* These are nearly all of the lowest type of Pot-pourri. They frequently begin with a Haydnesque introduction, often of considerable merit, then comes an Italian Allegro in the style of Spontini; half-way through, this gives way to a popular air for a solo instrument and this is followed by a trivial Rondo intended to keep on until the stage is ready. At the best, the subjects are devoid of interest, at the worst there is no workmanship to compensate us for its absence. In no single instance has



the composer tried to do his best, or indeed done anything but his worst.

2. *Ballads.* The one hundred and ninety here reviewed probably constitute not half the total number that Bishop wrote; there are in addition the "National Airs," twenty-four with words by Hayner Bayley and seventy-two to poems by Moore, besides many others. In the department of ballad-writing no deep musicianship is demanded; the composer has only to be simple and sincere. Simple Bishop always was, but no man can be sincere four hundred times running. I confess that the large majority of these songs appear to me to have been turned out of a machine, so cheap, so cut-and-dried are they. But a few of the best such as "The Dashing White Serjeant" (not in an opera, this) "My pretty Jane" and "The Pilgrim of Love" are so good as to make one marvel at the badness of the others. In the second rank come about a dozen quite beautiful specimens, such as "Adored and beauteous Isabel", "O, well do I remember" and "Home, sweet home!" (of which I shall speak separately) but these stand out brilliantly from the hundreds of absolutely futile specimens on exactly similar lines, but too hopelessly trivial to awaken even a passing interest. A song by Bishop when it is not of his best is a truly melancholy thing.

3. *Display songs.* Under this heading I class the operatic songs which Bishop wrote for the delectation of particular vocalists. Four of the florid ones—"Bid me discourse," "Tell me, my heart," "Should he upbraid" and "Lo, here the gentle lark!" have achieved immortality, but there are several others, now forgotten, which are quite as brilliant. In this class of work Bishop shows far more ingenuity and brilliance than one would expect to find in one who could write such feeble ballads. The tenor songs of the "Death of Nelson" type written for Braham are also clever but as to the comic songs, if they ever had any humour it has long since evaporated; the music is pitifully trivial.

4. *Duets and Trios.* Here Bishop is seen to somewhat better advantage; a man cannot write concerted music without taking trouble, consequently he has made few failures. The chief fault is the undue employment of Allegretto  $\frac{6}{8}$  time and the consequent sameness of the accompaniments. One little piece stands out from all the rest and deserves an immortality which it has not obtained. This is a Trio for three male voices, called "The Sailor's Welcome" from the opera of "For England, ho!" It should have found a place in every collection of English nautical music. Let the reader judge for himself.

Our ship in port, our an-chor cast, the tem-pest hushed and  
 calm the main, We lit-tle think of dan-gers past, or those that we must meet a - gain.  
 But while the cheer-ful glass goes round, goes round, In  
 ev'-ry draught is pleasure found, is found; For then we drink and drink with glee The  
 sail-or's wel-come home from sea, the sail-or's wel-come home from sea, the  
 sail-or's wel-come home from sea, the sail-or's wel-come home from sea.

6. *Glees and choruses.* Writers of books on music have been much put about to frame any satisfactory definition of the term "Glee." Bishop applies it to such diverse pieces as the Trio just quoted, a fully accompanied Trio and chorus, like "The Chough and Crow" and a dramatic ensemble like "Blow, gentle gales!" or "Now tramp!" This heedless misapplication of a name is a common thing in music and is of little consequence; what concerns us is that Bishop, in most of these concerted pieces, whether lyrical or dramatic, has left us something in the way of a solid contribution to our national art. The words are now and then disregarded, as in "Where art thou, beam of light?", the harmony may sound trite to modern ears, as in "Now tramp!" but the melody has an enduring charm and the vocal part writing is nothing less than masterly; in short, the large majority of these pieces are as good of their kind as it is possible to be.

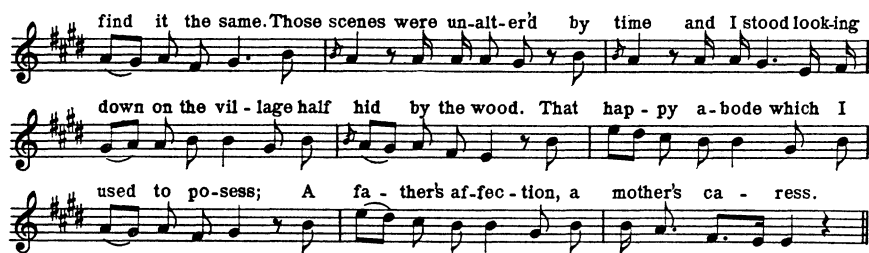
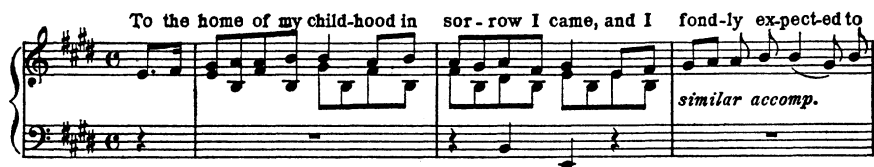
7. It is curious to turn from these brilliant successes to the hundreds of *Melodrames, Marches and Dance-tunes* and to find these no more worthy of consideration than the little scraps which every theatrical conductor writes or vamps up. They are

absolutely devoid of merit or interest, save in a single instance, that of the little dance in *John of Paris*, which Bishop used on several other occasions. This was adopted into the British army as a regimental parade-march and, I believe, still survives.

#### THE HISTORY OF "HOME! SWEET HOME!"

It should be interesting to Americans to read the authentic history of this famous song, as a belief has got about that John Howard Payne composed as well as wrote it. The earliest account of its genesis is incorrect in detail, but runs thus: In 1821 Bishop was engaged by Messrs. Goulding and Dalmaine to edit for them a volume of National Airs, the success of which caused a demand for a second collection. Bishop endeavoured to supply this, but could only find eleven suitable tunes. The publishers, knowing his facility, suggested that he should choose a country which had no known melodies and draw upon his invention. He did so, and "Home, sweet home—a Sicilian Air"—was the result. The tune was wedded—none too fitly—to Howard Payne's verses and leapt into immediate and enduring popularity.

This was the account taken down by me from the lips of the late Mr. Henry Littleton, who professed to have had it from the publisher Dalmaine. But upon examining the now scarce original collection it will be seen that Bishop's air appeared in the *first* volume and with other words. Further, the work consisted of three volumes, of which Bishop was responsible for the first and third and Sir John Stevenson for the second. Further, the "nationality" of nearly the whole of these thirty-six songs extends no further than the titles. Out of the twenty-four songs, which are labelled Portuguese, Bohemian, Sicilian, Hindostanee—anything but English—eighteen are certainly and twenty-one probably by Bishop himself. But the tunes in vol. II are, I think, all genuine. In a much larger collection published in 1825 with words by Thomas Moore no less than sixty out of seventy-two are by Bishop, though unacknowledged by him. There are also numerous bogus foreign melodies in his operas which are really his own. That this patent fact has never been exposed till now is to me quite unaccountable, but I stake my reputation upon its accuracy. As regards these first twelve National Airs, two of them, Nos. 3 (Unknown) and 5 (Spanish) are from his operas, where they are signed with his name. The twelfth is the "Sicilian Air" and runs thus; (the words of all are by Haynes Bayley.)

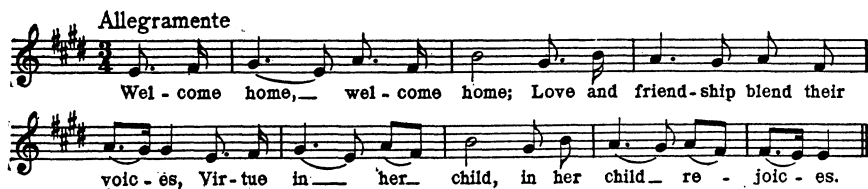


This tune cannot have attracted much notice in this form and so far from making a success the collection, from its extreme rarity at the present day, cannot have sold well. Two years later, when writing his opera of "Clari," the libretto of which was a bald translation of a French play, Bishop is said to have dragged out this "Sicilian Air" and adapted it to Howard Payne's words (which do not fit very well.) But it is somewhat curious to observe that the opera seems really written up to the ballad—as the rest of the music undoubtedly is—so that one would have expected "Home, sweet home!" to have had a prior existence as a ballad.

However this may be, Bishop seems to have had very little sense of the merits of his song. On reading through the opera one is horrified to find the most diverse and tasteless variants of it—half a dozen of them—in all sorts of times and keys. I must quote the two last and worst of these, as specimens of "frightfulness." In the last act it becomes a chorus of happy villagers welcoming home the tearful heroine.



and as a Finale it is squeezed into *polacca* time as a solo for the servant maid, Vespina, the chorus repeating it.



Even this is not the worst. The singer (Miss Tree) seems to have thought the ballad not good enough and a "*Grand scena*" indispensable, so Bishop has supplied one (of wretched quality) with the following elegant words.

In the promise of pleasure  
The silly believer  
Home forsaking, to brave  
The betraying world's wave  
Is left the world's scorn  
By the wily deceiver  
And finds but too late that wherever we roam  
There's no pleasure abroad like the pleasure of home.

*Allegro*

But droop not, poor castaway, O be not dejected!  
If still from the world's heartless bosom rejected.  
From your home on earth tho' cast houseless to roam  
Hope for mercy in Heav'n and be sure of a home.

The experienced musician at once perceives that the music was written first and this doggerel fitted to it—very possibly by the composer himself. I would not believe it of Howard Payne. That Bishop wrote both the "Sicilian Air" and its improved ballad version there can be no shadow of a doubt. Tentative phrases of the tune will even be found in works of his a little earlier in date. Whether the opera of "Clari" was written round it or not we cannot tell—possibly this was not originally the intention but became so during the writing of the work. But never was a tune of such abiding fame. Besides Bishop's second opera (No. 104) written avowedly on it, there is an opera *Anna Bolena* by Donizetti in which it is the leading motive (*pace* the anachronism) and it has taken a permanent place in the folk-songs of most—perhaps all—European countries. Did space permit I should like to quote some of these versions, of which I know seven, including a Spanish one in  $\frac{5}{8}$  time and a Hungarian one, transcribed by Liszt in one of his Rhapsodies under the title of *Pesther Carneval*.

I cannot find that any of these are of earlier date than between 1830 and 1840, so there is no question of prior claim to the melody. But one must own that it is the combination of domestic sentiment in the words together with the ultra-simple melody that has caused "Home, sweet home!" to attain absolute immortality. Neither Bishop nor Howard Payne can claim the sole credit; it belongs equally to both.